



Arizona Central West Zone Incident Management Team

February Fire NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:
Tuesday, February 14, 2006 9:00 a.m.

Contact number – (928) 468-9911
(602) 228-8399
(602) 525-4631

Acres: 4,243 acres
Cause: Human, under investigation
Containment: 90 percent
Terrain: Rough, broken, steep terrain
Crews: 10 crews
Available air support: Six helicopters

Start date: Monday, February 6, 2005
Location: 12 miles north of Payson, AZ
Fuels: Chaparral, pine and juniper
Total personnel: 512
Equipment: 21 engines, 6 dozers, 19 water tenders

Firefighters battling the February Fire were not forgotten on Valentine's Day. Payson area Girl Scout Troops delivered nearly 1800 individually-signed valentines to be distributed to firefighting personnel. "The girls just want everyone to know how much the community appreciates their efforts and they wanted to do something special for them," said troop leader Mandy Armstrong.

Cooperating weather conditions throughout the weekend facilitated a 90 percent fire containment by Valentine's Day. Mop-up will continue on Tuesday with land rehabilitation projects planned later in the week. The onset of a frontal passage on Tuesday and Wednesday may generate increased smoke from inside the burned area due to shifting winds but fire lines are considered secure.

The Arizona Central West Zone Incident Management Team will begin demobilization of fire personnel and equipment Tuesday as the incident winds down. Incident Commander John Philbin expressed his appreciation for a job well done. "Burnout operations have been successful and I am extremely pleased with the minimum impact to the environment. We've been light on the land and that's a good feeling when you're dealing with the terrain we were challenged with," he added. The environmentally-conscious firefighting efforts reinforce the Forest Service directive of *restoring ecological functionality to fire-adapted systems*.

Control Road (FR 64) between the Geronimo Estates Roads (FR 458) and the Washington Park Road (FR 32) will remain closed until further notice. Residents may access their properties. The speed limit is 20 mph due to increased traffic of incident personnel and potential limited visibility due to smoke.

For additional information, updates and maps see www.fs.fed.us/r3/cwz/index.htm.